

EXHIBIT B

CUI

FAQs

1. **Why is NSF terminating awards?** All Federal agencies that support research and development (R&D), including NSF, must ensure that taxpayer dollars are spent in the most efficient way possible consistent with each Agency's mission. This requires that NSF regularly evaluate its research priorities within the policy framework established by Congress, the Administration and the Director of NSF. Awards and funding opportunities that do not align with these priorities cannot be funded.
2. **Why is NSF changing its priorities?** NSF is continuing to prioritize cutting-edge discovery science and engineering (S&E) research, advancing technology and innovation, and creating opportunities for all Americans in every region of the Nation. NSF has always established priorities within the policy context set forth by Congress, the Administration and the Director of NSF, and it continues to do so.
3. **What types of awards are being terminated?** Awards that are not aligned with NSF's priorities have been terminated, including but not limited to those on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) and misinformation/disinformation.
4. **Can I still propose broadening participation activities (e.g., outreach) in fulfillment of the Broader Impacts criterion?** Investigators should prioritize the first six broader impacts goals as [defined by the America COMPETES Reauthorization Act of 2010](#). Investigators wishing to address goal seven—expanding participation in STEM for women and underrepresented groups—must ensure that all outreach, recruitment, or participatory activities in NSF projects are open and available to all Americans. Investigators may conduct these types of engagement activities to individuals, institutions, groups, or communities based on protected characteristics only as part of broad engagement activities. Investigators may also expand participation in STEM based on non-protected characteristics, including but not limited to institutional type, geography, socioeconomic status, and career stage. However, engagement activities aimed at these characteristics cannot indirectly preference or exclude individuals or groups based on protected characteristics.

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5. **Will NSF consider proposals directed to a legally mandated NSF program/funding opportunity?** NSF will continue to operate programs that contain elements of broadening participation for individuals based on protected characteristics that are explicitly established in law and prioritized in NSF appropriations language. The research and broader impacts activities proposed in response to these programs should align with the relevant statutory language and aim to generate knowledge broadly impactful to Americans from all backgrounds and regions in the country.

Projects submitted to legally mandated broadening participation programs must not directly or indirectly preference or exclude any Americans on the basis of protected characteristics. Projects that have limited impact or rely on DEI frameworks or advocacy do not effectuate NSF priorities.

6. **What about the court order that says you cannot withhold funding due to the EOs? Isn't NSF in violation of that?** No. NSF has continued to fund new awards and support existing awards that are in alignment with NSF priorities.

7. **What are the protected and non-protected characteristics?** Protected characteristics are those contained in relevant laws, such as but not limited to, the Equal Protection Clause of the Constitution and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

8. **There are still gaps in the achievements of certain groups of people. Can we still research those?** NSF will continue to fund projects that rate highly using our Intellectual Merit and Broader Impacts review criteria in high priority S&E areas. Projects that aim to create more opportunities for more people in every region of the country to participate in science and technology remain an important part of NSF's mission.

NSF will continue to operate legally mandated programs that aim to expand participation in STEM for individuals of protected characteristics so long as the projects submitted to these programs do not preference or limit participation based on these protected characteristics.

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9. **Can I research individuals or groups based on protected characteristics in other areas of S&E?** Yes. Researchers may recruit or study individuals based on protected characteristics when doing so is (1) intrinsic to the research question (e.g., research on human physiology), (2) not focused on broadening participation in STEM on the basis of protected characteristics, and (3) aimed to fill an important gap in S&E knowledge. For example, research on technology to assist individuals with disabilities may be supported even when the research subject recruitment is limited to those with disabilities.
10. **Is there a list of words I should be avoiding?** There is not a list of words. Investigators should focus on Intellectual Merit and Broader Impacts for proposals in a way that is consistent with NSF priorities.
11. **Can I still work with Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs)?** Yes. Collaboration and partnerships between and among various types of institutions of higher education (IHEs) as well as cross-sector partnerships involving government, academia, and the private sector remain a top priority.
12. **Are centers impacted? What about facilities that have DEI plans, will those be impacted?** The NSF guidance on broadening participation applies to all current and future NSF awards.
13. **Are you still funding research on misinformation/disinformation?** Per the [Presidential Action](#) announced January 20, 2025, NSF will not prioritize research proposals that engage in or facilitate any conduct that would unconstitutionally abridge the free speech of any American citizen. NSF will not support research with the goal of combating “misinformation,” “disinformation,” and “malinformation” that could be used to infringe on the constitutionally protected speech rights of American citizens across the United States in a manner that advances a preferred narrative about significant matters of public debate.



U.S. National Science Foundation
Office of the Director

MEMORANDUM

April 18, 2025

SUBJECT: Statement of U.S. National Science Foundation Priorities

The U.S. National Science Foundation (NSF) was established in 1950 to promote the progress of science, advance the national health, prosperity and welfare, and secure the national defense. It does this by investing in the most promising ideas and people across all fields of science and engineering (S&E). NSF priorities are grounded in the mission of the agency and modulated by statutory directives and administration priorities.

NSF uses two statutory criteria to ensure that every award has the potential to advance new knowledge (Intellectual Merit) with maximum impact on the Nation and its people (Broader Impacts). NSF investments unleash groundbreaking discoveries, translational solutions and expand participation in STEM. These efforts strengthen our domestic workforce to fuel economic prosperity, national security, and global S&E competitiveness.

The principles of merit, competition, equal opportunity, and excellence are the bedrock of the NSF mission. NSF continues to review all projects using Intellectual Merit and Broader Impacts criteria.

NSF's broadening participation activities, including activities undertaken in fulfillment of the Broader Impacts criterion, and research on broadening participation, must aim to create opportunities for all Americans everywhere.

These efforts should not preference some groups at the expense of others, or directly/indirectly exclude individuals or groups. Research projects with more narrow impact limited to subgroups of people based on protected class or characteristics do not effectuate NSF priorities.

NSF will continue to support research with the goal of understanding or addressing participation in STEM, in accordance with all applicable statutes and mandates, with the core goal of creating opportunities for all Americans.

NSF will continue to support basic and use-inspired research in S&E fields that focus on protected characteristics when doing so is intrinsic to the research question and is aligned with Agency priorities.

A blue ink signature of Sethuraman Panchanathan, written in a cursive style.

Sethuraman Panchanathan
Director

**U.S. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR
ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314
STAFF MEMORANDUM**

**OD 25-27
April 18, 2025**

COMMUNICATION

SUBJECT: U.S. National Science Foundation Priorities

I want to share an update with you on the agency's priorities. As you know, the U.S. National Science Foundation (NSF) was established in 1950 to promote the progress of science, advance the national health, prosperity and welfare, and secure the national defense. We do this by investing in the most promising ideas and people across all fields of science and engineering (S&E). NSF uses two statutory criteria to ensure that every award has the potential to advance new knowledge (Intellectual Merit) with maximum impact on the Nation and its people (Broader Impacts). NSF priorities are grounded in the mission of the agency and modulated by statutory directives and administration priorities.

Let me be clear, NSF will continue to use the gold standard merit review criteria and consider all projects using Intellectual Merit and Broader Impacts criteria. NSF's efforts to expand participation in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) must strengthen our domestic workforce to fuel economic prosperity, national security, and global S&E competitiveness. To do this, all of NSF's broadening participation activities, including research on broadening participation, must aim to create opportunities for all Americans everywhere. These efforts should not preference some groups at the expense of others, or directly/indirectly exclude individuals or groups.

I know many of you were involved in the review of our current awards and I know that was not an easy task. I want to express my sincerest gratitude to all of you for the time and care you have taken to go through the numerous reviews. Using this new guidance, a number of current awards have been identified that are not aligned with NSF priorities. Terminations of those awards will begin today. These reviews will continue, including for new proposals that are submitted and pending proposals that are still in the review process.

We have developed a list of [FAQs](#) reflecting NSF priorities that will be made public on our website this afternoon. They are attached for your reference. We will continue to add to this list as questions come in, so please submit those [here](#). We know there will be a lot of questions from our community and various stakeholders. Please point them to the [website](#) with the attached memo and FAQs.

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Sethuraman Panchanathan
Director

Distribution: All Staff

DEFSNSF_00006

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

NEETA THAKUR, *et al.*,

Plaintiffs,

v.

DONALD J. TRUMP, *et al.*,

Defendants.

Case No. 25-cv-04737-RFL

DECLARATION OF BRIAN STONE

Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1746, I, Brian Stone, declare as follows:

1. I am employed as the Chief of Staff, Office of the Director (OD), National Science Foundation (NSF). I am currently the Senior Official Performing the Duties of the NSF Director.
2. I have held the Chief of Staff position since April 2016, and I have been performing the Duties of the NSF Director since April 25, 2025, when Dr. Sethuraman Panchanathan resigned his position as NSF Director.
3. In my current position, I am responsible for performing the Duties of the NSF Director, which includes serving as the head of NSF, coordinating with the Executive Office of the President as well as other federal agencies, and overseeing operations of the agency. My function as Chief of Staff is to serve as the primary advisor and confidante to the NSF Director and to provide policy and strategic advice as needed.

4. On April 18, 2025, NSF issued a “Statement of U.S. National Science Foundation Priorities” (hereinafter “Statement”). The Statement elucidated that “NSF priorities are grounded in the mission of the agency and modulated by statutory directives and administration priorities.”

5. The Statement, along with Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), was published on NSF’s public-facing website (NSF.gov). NSF also issued a Foundation-wide Staff Memorandum (OD 25-17) to communicate the Statement to the entire workforce.

6. NSF formed an internal panel to review grant awards and determine if they aligned with NSF priorities. Based on the review, NSF began terminating awards beginning April 18th and conducted several rounds of terminations on a rolling basis. Awards were identified through keyword searches and analytics and were terminated, generally on Fridays for approximately four weeks. Some awards were identified by NSF employees; some awards were identified by employees of the United States DOGE Service (“USDS”) who were detailed to NSF; and some awards were identified by USDS employees who were not detailed to NSF.

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct. Executed on this 17th day of June, 2025.



Brian Stone
Senior Official Performing the Duties of the
NSF Director
National Science Foundation

From: [Greenwell, Amanda H](#)
To: [Williams, Angel R.](#)
Subject: FW: Documents- EMBARGOED until 3:05pm or when it goes live [Contains CUI]
Date: Thursday, June 5, 2025 11:56:15 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[Memo Statement of US National Science Foundation Priorities.pdf](#)
[OD Memo NSF Priorities FINAL doc.docx](#)
[FAQs FINAL.pdf](#)

From: Greenwell, Amanda H
Sent: Friday, April 18, 2025 2:01 PM
To: NSF Executive Leadership Team <nsf-exec-leadership-team@nsf.gov>; Heit, Evan K. <EKHEIT@nsf.gov>
Subject: Documents- EMBARGOED until 3:05pm or when it goes live [Contains CUI]

CUI

I'm attaching three things:

1. The note to staff that will go at 3pm
2. The Director's memo on priorities
3. FAQs on the priorities and terminations

Things to note- the Director's note will contain the Directors memo and FAQs. As soon as the note is sent both the memo and the FAQs will go live on a new website that you can access from any NSF page.

Social posts on X and LinkedIn will go as soon as the website is live along with a proactive media statement and will point back to the website.

-Amanda

Amanda Hallberg Greenwell
Head, Office of Legislative and Public Affairs
Office of the Director
Office: 703-292-8070
Email: agreenwe@nsf.gov

U.S. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
2415 Eisenhower Ave, Alexandria, VA 22314, USA



From: [Williams, Angel R.](#)
To: [Panchanathan, Sethuraman](#); [Stone, Brian](#); [Marrongelle, Karen A.](#); [Cheatham, Micah](#); [Greenwell, Amanda H](#)
Subject: RE: Statement of NSF Priorities [Contains CUI]
Date: Friday, April 18, 2025 11:57:01 AM

CUI

Received.

Thank you.

From: Panchanathan, Sethuraman <spanchan@nsf.gov>
Sent: Friday, April 18, 2025 11:17 AM
To: Stone, Brian <bstone@nsf.gov>; Marrongelle, Karen A. <kmarrong@nsf.gov>; Cheatham, Micah <miccheat@nsf.gov>; Williams, Angel R. <angwilli@nsf.gov>; Greenwell, Amanda H <AGREENWE@nsf.gov>
Subject: Statement of NSF Priorities [Contains CUI]

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CUI/PRIVILEGED

This email is to inform you that I am operating within my authority as Director of the U.S. National Science Foundation (NSF) and the attached memo memorializes a shift in NSF priorities.

Furthermore, the President has directed agencies to ensure that no Federal Government officer, employee, or agent engages in or facilitates any conduct that would unconstitutionally abridge the free speech of any American citizen and that no taxpayer resources are used to engage in or facilitate any conduct that would unconstitutionally abridge the free speech of any American citizen. Therefore, NSF will not support research with the goal of combating “misinformation,” “disinformation,” and “malinformation” that could be used to infringe on the constitutionally protected speech rights of American citizens across the United States in a manner that advances a preferred narrative about significant matters of public debate.

Sethuraman Panchanathan
Director

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